

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

The application has been amended so as to place it in condition for allowance at the time of the next Official Action.

The case was originally filed with claims 1-20. Claims 17-20 were previously cancelled. This amendment adds new claims 21-24, claim 21 being independent.

The Official Action objected to the drawings.

Responsively, the drawings have been amended.

The Official Action objected to the specification due to formal matters.

The specification has been amended as to form, including amending the noted objected-to formal matters.

The Official Action rejected claims 1, 8-10, and 14-16 as being anticipated by YOSHIOKA 5,210,468. Of interest, the first-named inventor of the present application is the inventor of the applied reference.

The Official Action rejected claims 2-7 over YOSHIOKA.

Claims 11-13 were rejected as obvious over this reference in view of NAGANO 5,428,263.

There were no claims indicated as being directed to allowable subject matter.

In order to a claim to be anticipated, each recited feature of the invention must be disclosed. As each recited feature of independent claim 1 is not disclosed by the applied

reference, claim 1 is not anticipated. On the top of page 4 of the Official Action, it is stated that "as disclosed by YOSHIOKA, the upper and lower electrodes can be at equipotential."

Applicants have carefully studied this reference and do not find that the reference discloses the upper and lower electrodes being at equipotential. With reference to Figure 3(B), it is clear that the seed discharge electrodes 2 are powered by source 14 whereas the main discharge electrodes 4 are powered by source 13.

Also see independent claim 1 that explicitly recites a first power supply means including means for supplying a first voltage pulse to said first pair of electrodes and a second power supply means including means for supplying a second voltage pulse to said pair of second electrodes. In reviewing the applied reference, it is clear that what is taught is that each of the electrodes has its own power source and receives different voltage pulses. There is no teaching that the voltage pulses can be synchronized and equalized to make them equipotential. Absent such teaching, it is not fair to say that the reference makes such a disclosure.

Further, see that the application claim 1 recitation is "said lower and upper electrodes being electrically connected to each other." Accordingly, it is this recitation which must be anticipated by the reference. As discussed above, the reference

clearly does not disclose, or for that matter even suggest, that the upper and lower electrodes are electrically connected to each other.

In view of this noted shortcoming of the applied reference, the anticipation rejection is not believed to be viable. Accordingly, reconsideration and allowance of claim 1 are respectfully requested.

The dependent claims are believed to be allowable at least for depending from an allowable claim.

As to the obviousness rejection of claims 11-13 in view of NAGANO, the Official Action states that Figure 12 of the secondary reference shows connecting a cathode pattern 12 to a terminal electrode 3 by way of a connecting electrode 13.

All this teaches is that one can connect a cathode pattern to a terminal electrode via some connecting device. From this the Official Action jumps to the conclusion that it would have been obvious "to have utilized the connecting electrode of NAGANO to connect the upper and lower electrodes of YOSHIOKA in order to eliminate the problem and withstand voltage and to enhance the trigger effect and superior flexibility and conductivity of the electrodes." Applicants fail to see how the teaching of connecting a cathode pattern to a terminal electrode via a connecting electrode has anything to do with the motivational statement asserted by the Official Action. Further,

the motivational statement seems to have nothing to do with connecting together the seed discharge electrode 2 to the main discharge electrode 4 of YOSHIOKA. Accordingly, this obviousness rejection is not believed to be viable.

In view of the above, the originally-presented claims are believed to be patentable. Further, the newly-presented claims are also believed to be patentable.

Applicants believe that the present application is in condition for allowance and an early indication of the same is respectfully requested.

Should there be any matters that need to be resolved in the present application, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies, to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 25-0120 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. § 1.16 or under 37 C.F.R. § 1.17.

Respectfully submitted,

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